

Message Text

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ACTION EA-01

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PA-01 INR-01 PRS-01 /005 W

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O R 050820Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO USINFO WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 5655

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

SECDEF WASHDC

UNCLAS PHNOM PENH 4978

UNINFO ALSO FOR VOA NEWSROOM

USINFO ALSO FOR IEA

BANGKOK FOR HEDGES

BANGKOK, HONG KONG AND SAIGON FOR VOA CORRESPONDENTS

STATE FOR S/PRS AND EA/P

SECDEF FOR OASD/PA

E. O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: KHMER SITUATIONER

1. GOVERNMENT UNITS AT KAMPOT REGROUPED THURSDAY NIGHT, ATTACKED COMMUNIST ELEMENTS NORTH OF THE CITY, AND EXPANDED THE DEFENSE PERIMETER THERE BY A DISTANCE OF FOUR HUNDRED METERS. COMMUNIST PRESSURE NORTH AND WEST OF THE CITY WAS LIGHT THURSDAY NIGHT IN CONTRAST WITH THE DAY BEFORE, AND NO COMMUNIST PRESSURE WAS REPORTED IN THE SOUTHEAST.

2. COMMUNIST FORCES THURSDAY HAD SEIZED POSITIONS ON THE EAST BANK OF THE RIVER LEADING FROM KAMPOT TO THE SEA. DESPITE THIS, A KHMER NAVY CONVOY CARRYING MAJOR GOVERNMENT REINFORCEMENTS MADE A SUCCESSFUL PASSAGE INTO KAMPOT UNDER HEAVY KHMER AIR FORCE COVER. A GOVERNMENT OPERATION WAS LAUNCHED TODAY TO RETAKE THE LOST POSITIONS ALONG THE RIVER BANK.

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3. COMMUNIST GUNNERS HIT A GOVERNMENT AMMUNITION SUPPLY

POINT AT KAMPOT YESTERDAY AND DAMAGED SEVERAL ARTILLERY PIECES. FANK ARTILLERY CONTINUED TO FIRE AT COMMUNIST POSITIONS, HOWEVER, AND REPLACEMENT AMMUNITION AS WELL AS RICE WAS AIR-DROPPED YESTERDAY AND TODAY. KHMER AIR FORCE T-28S PROVIDED CONTINUOUS AIR-STRIKE SUPPORT FOR FANK GROUND FORCES ON THURSDAY, LAST NIGHT AND TODAY.

4. LITTLE CHANGE WAS REPORTED THURSDAY AND TODAY IN THE MILITARY SITUATION IN THE OUDONG-LOVEK AREA. COMMUNIST ELEMENTS RENEWED LIGHT PRESSURE ON THE FANK 80TH BRIGADE EAST OF OUDONG LAST NIGHT AFTER A DAY OF RELATIVE INACTIVITY ON THURSDAY. GOVERNMENT UNITS REPULSED A LIGHT COMMUNIST GROUND ATTACK AT LOVEK ON THURSDAY.

5. THE COMBINED GOVERNMENT SWEEP OPERATION SOUTHEAST OF NEAK LUONG CONCLUDED ON THURSDAY. GOVERNMENT UNITS EXPANDED THE DEFENSE PERIMETER THREE KILOMETERS DURING THE OPERATION AND REPORT KILLING THIRTY COMMUNIST SOLDIERS. GOVERNMENT LOSSES WERE REPORTED AS LIGHT.

6. THE FANK 11TH BRIGADE CONCLUDED A MAJOR SWEEP OPERATION NORTHWEST AND NORTHEAST OF KOMPONG THOM ON THURSDAY. IN CONTINUOUS FIGHTING SINCE THE OPERATION BEGAN ON APRIL 1, THE BRIGADE KILLED TWELVE COMMUNIST SOLDIERS, SEIZED THIRTY COMMUNIST WEAPONS AND CAPTURED SIX PRISONERS. THE BRIGADE'S LOSSES WERE LIGHT TO MODERATE.

7. DURING THE OPERATION, BRIGADE SOLDIERS RESCUED A VILLAGER NEAR SANKOR NORTHWEST OF KOMPONG THOM WHO HAD BEEN BEATEN, KNIFED, AND LEFT FOR DEAD BY THE COMMUNISTS. THE BRIGADE REPORTS THAT SEVEN OTHER VILLAGERS, INCLUDING A CHILD, HAD BEEN EXECUTED BY AXE BLOWS TO THE HEAD BECAUSE THEY HAD WISHED TO LEAVE THE VILLAGE AND LIVE UNDER GOVERNMENT SECURITY AT KOMPONG THOM. (THIRTY-FOUR THOUSAND VILLAGERS HAVE FLED COMMUNIST-CONTROLLED AREAS TO LIVE IN KOMPONG THOM SINCE LATE JANUARY.)

8. THE 11TH BRIGADE ALSO REPORTS THAT COMMUNIST OFFICIALS EXECUTED TEN VILLAGE DEFENSE SOLDIERS AT KOMPONG KOU TEN KILOMETERS WEST OF KOMPONG THOM ON APRIL 1 FOLLOWING TEMPORARY UNCLASSIFIED

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COMMUNIST OCCUPATION OF THE VILLAGE. THEY WERE EXECUTED BECAUSE THEY WERE PROTECTING VILLAGERS THERE WHO HAD FLED COMMUNIST-CONTROLLED AREA EARLIER. THE INFORMATION WAS SUPPLIED BY A SURVIVING MEMBER OF THE VILLAGE DEFENSE FORCE WHO REACHED GOVERNMENT LINES AND IS NOW HOSPITALIZED AT KOMPONG THOM. REFUGEES FROM COMMUNIST-CONTROLLED AREAS NORTH OF KOMPONG THOM HAVE REPORTED SIMILAR INCIDENTS IN RECENT WEEKS.

9. MILITARY ACTIVITY IN THE PHNOM PENH AREA REMAINED

AT REDUCED LEVELS. ONE CONFIRMED COMMUNIST 107MM ROCKET FELL ON THE SOUTHERN EDGE OF PHNOM PENH EARLY THURSDAY MORNING, REPORTEDLY WOUNDING TWO PERSONS. EARLY PRESS REPORTS ON THURSDAY ERRONEOUSLY ATTRIBUTED THE INCIDENT TO 105MM HOWITZER FIRE.

10. ELSEWHERE IN THE REPUBLIC, LIGHT COMMUNIST MORTAR AND GROUND ATTACKS WERE REPORTED AT PREY VENG, KOMPONG THOM, SVAY RIENG, AND ON AN ISLAND IN THE BASSAC RIVER TEN KILOMETERS SOUTHEAST OF PHNOM PENH.

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